

DRAFT

Devon Parent Partnership Impartiality Policy

Summary for Parents

In all our work we seek to ensure that information and support is given to parents and professionals in an impartial way. The SEN code of Practice says that we should provide for parents 'accurate, neutral information on their rights, roles and responsibilities within the SEN process, and on the wide range of options available, to enable them to make informed decisions.' (SEN Code of Practice 2001:26)

'We do not take sides, we don't favour one view over another but we will ensure that all available facts, truths, opinion and perceptions are being shared openly.'

We are an 'in house' service that sits at 'arms length' from the local authority. We aim to be impartial, not favouring any person or party more than another and striving to be fair and unbiased. We will endeavour to present factual information in order to bring about a resolution to the issues with which it is presented.

Removing barriers to Impartiality

- We are committed to positively opposing discrimination
- We acknowledge and respect every person as an individual and will endeavour to be responsive, courteous and helpful to anyone who contacts us.

Relationship with the Local Authority

- We are managed as an 'in house' service but maintain our impartiality by having someone sufficiently independent of the Local Authority(LA) to line manage the service but also have a close enough relationship to contribute to local policy and practice.
- When you disagree with the LA we will provide impartial information and support to explain policy and help you understand your entitlement.

Monitoring Impartiality

- We will establish a Steering Group that will include parent representatives. It will have responsibility for steering and safeguarding the effectiveness and impartiality of the service.
- The Steering Group, Parent Forums and service users will be asked to regularly review the impartiality of DPSS.

Networking and Collaboration

- When working with other professionals we will make them aware of the impartial nature of our service.
- Whether working with parents or professionals we will consider factors that may be affecting their behaviour which may influence our impartiality.
- We will ensure that when we attend meetings we are clear with those attending about the impartiality of our role.
- To support parents and professionals we may offer constructive challenge to perceptions of some events.

Reflective Practice

- We are aware that other factors may have an impact on our impartiality and will use training and supervision to monitor standards and encourage reflective practice.
- We will support parents to prepare and present their own views so that they can be understood by others but will not advocate on their behalf so as to promote or defend any particular point of view.

Working Practice of Challenge

- We will seek to resolve any conflict between the views of the school, LA or the parent rather than promote them.
- We will support parents, individually or collectively, to convey their views to schools, the LA or other agencies.
- We will provide information and guidance to help facilitate a resolution to any issue that we are supporting you with.
- If you are unhappy with any aspect of our service, including our impartiality, you can make a complaint. We will provide you with information about how to do this.

Training and Supervision

- All staff and volunteers (IPS) who work for DPPS will follow the guidance in the Impartiality Policy. This will be part of training and will be monitored through supervision.
- All of our staff, volunteers and members of the Steering Group will be introduced to the Impartiality Policy through induction and training.

Information and Publicity

- Our leaflets, website and publicity materials will provide accurate and neutral information which meets the requirement to be impartial. They will be regularly reviewed by staff, the Steering Group and Parent Forums.
- The Impartiality Policy will be published, accessible on the DPPS website and reviewed annually.

Location

- The central office is located in a LA building but not with the SEN Team. We use working practices to ensure that DPPS work is not seen or overheard by other departments. We will use drop-in surgery facilities around the county to provide independent access for parents.

A full version of the DPPS Impartiality Policy is available on our website.

www.parentpartnershipdevon.org.uk